

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A process for treating exhaust gases, the process comprising

a step of providing an aeration stirring tank having at least one baffle and a stirring device comprising a motor, a shaft rotatably connected to the motor, and a blade attached to the shaft;

a step of introducing exhaust gases into an aqueous alkaline liquid in said aeration stirring tank while stirring the aqueous alkaline liquid thereby turning the exhaust gases into fine foam by the shear force of the stirring blade to disperse the liquid; and

a step of further removing harmful gases from the gases discharged from the aeration stirring tank.

Claim 2 (Previously presented): The process according to Claim 1, wherein said step of further removing comprises a process of allowing the gases discharged from the aeration stirring tank to come into contact with an aqueous liquid.

Claim 3 (Previously presented): The process according to Claim 1, wherein said step of further removing comprises a step of introducing the gases discharged from the aeration stirring tank into a packed column filled with an agent.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The process according to Claim 1, wherein said step of further removing comprises a step of allowing the gases discharged from the aeration stirring tank to come into contact with an aqueous liquid, and a step of introducing the gases discharged from the aeration stirring tank into a packed column filled with an agent.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): A process for treating exhaust gases according to Claim 1, wherein said aqueous alkaline liquid is an aqueous solution containing no alkaline metal element and the pH of said aqueous alkaline solution is from 7.1 to 10.

Claim 6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Previously presented): A process for treating exhaust gases according to Claim 1, further comprising a step of discharging exhaust gases from a semiconductor production device, said exhaust gases being introduced by the introduction step into the aqueous alkaline liquid.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): An apparatus for treating exhaust gases, the apparatus comprising

an aeration stirring tank for introducing exhaust gases into an aqueous alkaline liquid while stirring the aqueous alkaline liquid; and

at least one device selected from a gas-liquid contact device for allowing gases discharged from said aeration stirring device to come into contact with the aqueous liquid, and a packed column filled with an agent for passing gases discharged from said aeration stirring device; wherein

said aeration stirring tank has at least one baffle and a stirring device comprising a motor, a shaft rotatably connected to the motor, and a blade attached to the shaft.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): The process according to Claim 1, further comprising forming in the aeration stirring tank a foam comprising the exhaust gases and the aqueous alkaline liquid.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The process according to Claim 9, further comprising stirring the foam with the blade.